



# LOCAL 506 UNION NEWS

Volume 65, Issue 10

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Thursday, October 16, 2014

## National President to Swear in New Regime

**Bruce Klipple**, National President will swear in the newly elected officers during the third shift membership meeting on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. This will be the first order of business and the new regime will then immediately take over as the new era of leadership begins.

As been mentioned and written about many times, that **"The Members Run this Union"**, and those who exercised their right to vote in the general election reflects this statement. I would urge you to get behind your new leaders because no matter who is at the helm, the focus must still be in the best interests of the members.

As with any change, there will be those who have mixed feelings and might harbor ill feelings because their candidate (s) didn't succeed. My comment to this is simply, "Get Over It". This is a rank-in-file union and if it ever becomes anything other than that, the future of this union could become very bleak. Unity will be the key to keep this union moving forward and it's always better to travel together than it is to travel alone.

## Recalls Still Coming

Once again, there is good news because PLOW'D employees are still being recalled. This is a far cry from what we were facing in the past when the company announced that hundreds of our members would lose their employment. There are job openings being posted as well as continued internal recalls taking place.

We continue to receive calls as to where people are on the recall list and as stated before, we have to make sure that they are recalled by class, code, and more importantly, seniority. There may be employees who hold multiple classes or codes, and we (everyone) must pay close attention to make sure everything is done decent and in order.

So far, there have been very few snags and the ones that have occurred, were handled in a timely manner. These recalls began back in April and has continued until this day. We have always stated that employment comes with orders and so far, over 200 laid off members have been called back to work. We are very optimistic that all will be called back and this is certainly something that we were very hopeful would happen.

**Get out and  
VOTE!  
NOVEMBER 4, 2014**

## OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

### Agenda:

- ☐ Swearing in of Officers
- ☐ General Business
- ☐ Committee Updates

### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS & TIMES ARE:

Thursday, October 23, 2014 (All meetings)  
7:20 a.m. (3rd Shift)  
12:30 p.m. (2nd Shift)  
3:20 p.m. (1st Shift)

## New Regime Rolls in During Upturn

*By B.A. Wayne Burnett*

Now that the general election is behind us, I want to make a few things clear. I have often spoken and written many times that employment comes with orders and this remains true yesterday, today, and will in the unknown future as well. During my many years here at GE as well as other long service employees can testify, that this has always been the case.

When I started here, there were close to fourteen thousand employees employed here at the Erie plant. During that time many of us have witnessed and seen many changes here, from the tearing down of buildings, which eliminated jobs, to technology changes that made some manufacturing procedures more efficient, thus needing fewer people, and even the sale of a business that was still located within the property itself. Some will remember Aerospace, while most won't even know what I'm talking about.

Those changes alone have taken thousands of jobs from this community and that's just GE alone. Then, when you consider that GE, as well as many other corporations, have become global giants, thousands more good, family sustaining jobs left this country. Any or all of these factors most likely played a part in the job market, while other companies made their fortune and decided that they had enough.

I know there are many of you who work here today because your former employers either closed, fell victim to a financial crisis (as in 2008) or moved to another country. Many can remember when you could find employment anywhere in the city, for there was an abundance of jobs to be had. Even if you quit your job, you could more than likely return to the same place of employment and get rehired. Those days are gone now, and probably will never return again, so you see now how the tides have turned and the times have changed.

Since I was elected to this position and took office in April 2009, it has been non-stop as to what this union has encountered. First, we were met with an all employee tent revival asking our members to take a wage freeze, re-look at lean rates, code consolidation, a temporary employee restructure, and the threat of mandatory overtime. It's amazing how short memories are when our union allowed all of central maintenance to join in the production arena

to help the company with customer commitments in 2008, only to be told that we failed to deliver to GE Corporate what was promised by top company officials.

We were told that "09" would be a tough year and that proved to be very true when the company announced and delivered in February, (WARN Notice) that two hundred employees would lose their jobs and hundreds more would experience TLOW's that could become permanent. Again in September of "09", this same announcement came and was more devastating than the first one. This one indicated that fourteen hundred employees would lose their jobs starting in November and they would be permanent.

There are some of you who retained your employment because the company offered to let people go. Those who decided to take advantage of this offer, went out with all the benefits that comes with normal retirement, (unreduced pension, supplements, medical, dental, and life insurance) at age 60. This too, has gone by the wayside because the company now thinks that these benefits are too costly to provide.

This was evident during the last announcement of PLOW's when the company stated that you could save a job, leave, but would receive no medical or supplements. This should open the eyes of all who felt that they were shafted when they weren't offered SERO's. The company did not and I repeat, did not want to even talk about the subject, contrary to what you might think or what you may have heard. I know that no matter what, people will always read into situations how they want to and especially when it's an area that benefits them personally.

Then the company began offering what I call a new incentive plan for people to leave called VRIP (Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program). Under this program, certain criteria had to be met, with the most important aspect being that an employee had to be age 60 or older with a minimum of ten years continuous service. While this was good for some, it up-set many of our members because some members had many years of service, but did not qualify because they didn't have the age.

For those who took advantage of this offer, they departed with all the benefits that come with a normal retirement, as well as 75% of their annual income before taxes. Even then, it was still up to the company if they wanted to replace that employee. I want to bring this to your attention, so that you can

understand that, “things ain’t what they used to be”. In order to keep what you’ve fought for through the years and to expand them, you have to do it together. Will there always be jobs? The short answer is yes, but the question (s) are, what kind of jobs will they be, what kind of wages will they pay, and when you look at all that has happened in this plant, where will the work get done. I’m sure there are many things on the horizon, and there’s no doubt that GE is already gearing up for the future.

You have already expressed your feeling concerning healthcare and who knows what else lies in ahead, so get prepared. Will the company offer something that will satisfy you? That question can only be answered by you, but remember, it’s not just about only you, it’s about everyone. The good news is that your newly elected leadership is coming in during an upturn in the business that started back in April and although we were expecting to lose hundreds of our members, it now looks like they’ll all be re-employed. That is certainly good news.

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## Rebuttal Concerning GE Pension Plan

International Representative **Gene Elk** recently sent a letter to the company in response to the company inserting new language on a GE Internal Web-Site concerning the GE Pension Plan. Employees nearing retirement often visit this benefit page to review their estimated “retirement income” at normal retirement and the information in question claims that the **“the Company reserves the right to terminate, amend, eliminate, or replace the GE pension benefit program at its discretion and at anytime”**.

While this may arguably apply to employees who are not represented by unions, the company has no right to take such action under the terms of the UE-GE National Agreement. Gene sent a copy of the underlined portion in this article to **Greg Capito**, Vice President of Human Resources and requested that the company correct this erroneous and misleading information.

GE has no authority to amend or terminate pension benefits during the term of our collective bargaining agreement. He also sent all the information refuting this statement.

## Thanks

*By B.A. Wayne Burnett*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank this membership for allowing me to serve in this union, for it was truly a privilege and one that I never took for granted. We’ve encountered some very difficult times over the years and I know that you can’t or won’t ever please everyone, but those who make the decision to serve, knows this coming in.

Whenever someone decides to serve, you immediately remove yourself and put the interest of others in the forefront. Hopefully, this is the mind set of all who make this commitment and if it’s not, it will surely reveal itself in time. Being a servant is not an easy task, for you will be praised one moment and criticized the next. This all comes with the territory when it comes to serving and only those who truly care, will be able to withstand the situations they are confronted with. Being a leader doesn’t mean you tell people what they want to hear, it means you let them know the reality of what’s going on.

There are times in life when people second guess the decisions they make, but serving this Local is one decision I would never change and again, I would like to thank you for that opportunity. As I move on, I would encourage you to get behind your leaders, whether it’s a steward on the shop floor to your recently elected officers, for this is the most important aspect of being in a union. Togetherness can yield good results, but division just leads to one problem after another. Again, thank you.

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## GET More from Your Healthcare Benefits

**Save \$ and Simplify with Expert Tips, New Tools & Enrollment Decision information**

Where: CIC Auditorium

When: Monday, October 20th, 2014

7:30am

Thursday, October 23rd, 2014

7:30am; 1:30pm; 3:30pm

Friday, October 24th, 2014

11:00am; 1:30pm; 3:30pm

Sessions are 1 hour in length. No reservations required.

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## Points of Interests

- New Regime takes over and they will decide what future events the local will participate in. Hopefully, all community related activities will continue because this local does a lot for this and surrounding communities, thus touching many lives.
- Nominations for 2015 Eastern Region Delegates will take place at this month's membership meetings. The three top officers (constitutionally) will serve as delegates and seven other rank-in-file members will have the opportunity. The four receiving the most votes will be your official delegates, while the next top three vote getters will serve as alternate delegates. The voting will take place at the November meetings and in case of a tie vote, a run-off election will be held in December.
- The 2015 Holiday schedule has not been presented to the Union as of this edition, so it should be coming in the near future.
- Don't forget to vote on Election Day (November 4<sup>th</sup>). Many sacrifices were made so that your voices could be heard, so don't waste this opportunity to speak at the polls.
- If you know or see a Veteran, by all means thank them for their service to this country. We sometimes take for granted the freedom that we enjoy today and many don't realize the price that was paid for us to have this freedom. Thanks go out to all who served and especially to those who paid the ultimate price.



## Pilot Training Program for Machinist

Manufacturing Training Leader **Mary Schmidt** recently spoke at the Job Preservation Meeting on a machine operator training program that will occur sometime this quarter. The company is teaming with Erie Institute of Technology (EIT) to build a solid foundation of skills necessary for world class machining.

The two week classroom session will consist of five (5) modules: Shop Math, Blueprint Reading, Measurement Geometric Dimensioning, Tolerancing, and Safe Practices. After completion of this classroom training, hands on training will continue in the GE Erie work areas. More information concerning this program will be explained by the company.



## FLU PREPARE & PREVENT

The single best way to avoid the flu is to get vaccinated every year, but what does that mean?

### Who should get vaccinated?

Everyone 6 months and older is recommended for annual flu vaccination with rare exception.

### How much does a vaccine cost?

Flu vaccines are part of your preventive coverage, covered at 100%, if you are enrolled in one of GE's medical benefit plans and you choose an in-network provider.

### When should you be vaccinated?

Yearly flu vaccination should begin soon after flu vaccine is available, and ideally by October. However, getting vaccinated even later can be protective, as long as flu viruses are circulating. It is best that people get vaccinated so they are protected before influenza begins spreading in their community.

### Where can you get vaccinated?

❖ **NEW THIS YEAR:** At CVS Pharmacies as part of your prescription coverage – no payment required at time of visit. [Bring your CVS prescription insurance card](#) to the pharmacy.

**CVS/caremark**

- ❖ On-site GE clinics
- ❖ At your doctor's office as part of your medical coverage – no payment required at time of visit
- ❖ At any other pharmacy – upfront payment may be required. You will need to file a manual reimbursement claim with your medical carrier (Aetna, UHC, CDPHP, etc.)

### Why should you get vaccinated?

- ❖ Among unvaccinated employees, flu-like illnesses accounted for 39% of sick days and 49% of days with reduced employee productivity.
- ❖ For each flu or cold, a person feels sick for five to six days.

### Where can you get more information the flu?

- ❖ [CDC.gov](#)
- ❖ Your primary care provider

## FLU PREPARE & PREVENT

❖ At your local on-site clinic

## Eastern Region Council Meeting

On Friday, October 17, Local 506 will host a Caucus for the Young Activist Program. This program is designed to encourage more involvement by UE members ages 35 and under. It is now in its fifth year and they will celebrate this occasion starting at 3:30.

They will share ideas and work together to create useful videos that can be used in future organizing campaigns to educate current or future members. On Saturday, the 18<sup>th</sup>, they will attend the Regional Council meeting and give a report on their Friday activities and will participate in other educational workshops.

## Help Still Available

Just a reminder, that if you're having problems of a personal nature and need to talk to someone, call **Keith Eller** at 875-4327. He has and continues to be a very fruitful source when it comes to helping employees deal with personal situations.

You can rest assured that your issue is kept at the highest level of confidentiality. We want to thank Keith for the many folks that he has helped and hopefully, he will continue to service those in need for many years to come. Thanks Keith.



# Happy Halloween

## Schedule Your Preventive Physical On-Site! Confidential, Convenient, and Covered at 100% for Employees by your GE Health Plan

- **When:** Schedule accessible for all shifts
- **Where:** GE Transportation – Erie
- **How:** Call the UPMC Hamot Outpatient Coordination Center to schedule or ask questions.

**(814) 877-8998**

Tell the operator you are a GE Employee calling to schedule your on-site preventive physical

Complete your on-site physical in Nov–Dec 2014 or Jan 2015 and receive a **\$25 Country Fair Gas Card**



- Appointments scheduled on work time (with supervisor pre-approval)
- Physicals & lab work provided by **UPMC Hamot** physicians and nurses
- Includes preventive lab work on-site prior to doctor visit
- No out-of-pocket expense (for employees covered by a GE health plan)
- All medical records are confidential and never shared with GE
- Results transferable to the primary care physician of your choice

# UPMC

## Trail of Treats

Over the past few years, this union has participated in the “Trail of Treats” endeavor that is sponsored by the Sarah Reed Children’s Center and the Achievement Center. This two-day trick or treat event provides a safe in-door setting for the children of this community.

Once again, Local 506 is a table sponsor and hopefully, as last year, our members will contribute to this event by donating candy or monetary gifts to purchase candy through the stewards or chief steward’s system. The event will be held at the Millcreek Mall on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Many of our members took part in this fun filled event and showed that UE Local 506 cares about what happens in this community.

The proceeds from this endeavor will benefit children with disabilities and mental health issues through these two organizations. Let’s do our best to surpass the awesome job that this local did last year.



## NOVEMBER 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Daylight Savings Time Ends	3 Steward & Members Classes	4 Election Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Veteran's Day	12 618 MEMBERSHIP MEETING R.A.G.E. MEMBERSHIP MEETING	13	14	15
16	17	18 E-BOARD MEETING (TENTATIVE)	19	20 506 MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS	21 R.A.G.E. BOARD MEETING	22
23 30	24	25	26	27 Thanksgiving 	28 Holiday	29



The Employees Community Service Fund of GE “CSF” Administrator elections for: **Building 5, Building 6 MS, Building 10, Building 18C / 42-7, Buildings 4, 20, 24, 44** is scheduled for **November 28, 2014**.

Nominations will be accepted for these buildings November 3<sup>rd</sup>, through November 7<sup>th</sup>. Nominating posters will be found in these buildings at each CSF Bulletin board and other prominent areas. Should an election be necessary, election notices listing the nominees, voting times and locations will be posted on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. Each Administrator will serve a two-year term.

**Nominees must be a member of the CSF and work in the represented areas.**

## AA Meeting Schedule

**Where:** Building 6, Room 150 Conference Rm.

**When:** Thursdays  
**1<sup>st</sup> Shift - 12:00 noon**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Shift - 7:30 pm**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Shift - 3:00 am**

## Change of Address Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Local \_\_\_\_\_

*Return To:* The Union Hall  
 3923 Main Street • Erie, PA 16511